



## **For Immediate Release**

**July, 1, 2010**

**Release #. 1000703-01**

### **2SCR Begins Afghanistan mission with Partnership and Professionalism**

Story and Photos by Sgt. Jerry Wilson

**Zabul, Afghanistan** –Partnership and professionalism was the theme Wednesday night June 30 as key leaders from U.S., Romanian, Lithuanian, and Afghan Forces gathered at Forward Operations Base Lagman for a Transfer of Authority dinner. The dinner was held to honor the partners which compose Combined Team Zabul by outgoing 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team, 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division that made up Task Force Fury and to welcome the 2<sup>nd</sup> Stryker Cavalry Regiment as it assumes leadership of CTZ.

Task Force Fury Command Sgt. Major Mark Sturdevant said that the road that lies before 2SCR will be a difficult and often times a perilous one, but stressed how important the struggles are for the people of Zabul to understand and feel what freedom is like for those who have it.

Sturdevant also said there is light at the end of that long dark road with the people that make up Combined Team Zabul. Task Force Fury Commander, Col. Brian Drinkwine, continued the evening by reflecting on his time in command and the cooperation he shared with his coalition brethren.

“When we talk about Zabul,” he said. “We talk about true partnership, integration and true brother and sisterhood.”

“For the paratroopers and Soldiers that I command,” he continued. “It has been a great honor to work with and learn from my Afghan brothers how to take care of the people and do the mission right.”

While Drinkwine said he was a little saddened to be going, he took great comfort in knowing he was leaving the mission in the capable hands of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Stryker Cavalry Regiment.

“Command Sgt. Major Morris has a fantastic record in the Army,” he said, “all the Soldiers of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Stryker Cavalry Regiment are bringing a great reputation and experience to Zabul.”

Drinkwine went on to speak highly of Col. James Blackburn, the 75<sup>th</sup> Colonel of the Regiment. “It brings great joy to my heart to know that my brother, Jim Blackburn, whom I have known for five years and been to combat with, is coming in,” he said. “In these two men (Blackburn and Morris) you are getting such great quality leadership.”

Drinkwine presented the Regiment with a certificate of appreciation and a photo of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne patch.

Col. Blackburn said he was honored to be taking up the mantle from Drinkwine and looks forward to the mission ahead.

“It is a pleasure to be among professionals as we honor the fine Soldiers that comprise Combined Team Zabul,” he said. “We are excited to exploit the narrow window of opportunity before us this summer as we continue to work towards a safer and more secure Afghanistan.”

The evening concluded with the presentation of a certificate of appreciation to the Deputy Governor of the Zabul Province, Gulab Shah Alikhel.

The Deputy Governor thanked Col. Drinkwine and the Soldiers of Task Force Fury for their work and helping to work towards bringing peace to the people of Afghanistan. He went on to assure Col. Blackburn that he will have the full support and cooperation of the people of Zabul.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Stryker Cavalry Regiment is partnering with Afghan National Security Forces and other ISAF Forces to form Combined Team Zabul. The mission of CTZ is to conduct population oriented operations and to neutralize insurgent activity in and around key terrain in RC-South. The intent of these

operations is to promote freedom of movement and enable enduring stability and security for the people of Afghanistan.

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For additional information, contact the CTZ Public Affairs Office at SIPR: TBD Rochan Cell 0793397897 or 0793369910



### **Strong Bonds**

**Col. James Blackburn, the 75<sup>th</sup> Commander of 2SCR, right, shakes hands with the Deputy Governor of Zabul Province, Gulab Shah Alikhel, during the Relief in Place, Transfer of Authority dinner held June 30 at FOB Lagman.**



## **New Beginnings**

**The Command Team of CTZ and Task Force Fury strengthen their bonds with a cake cutting ceremony during the Relief in Place, Transfer of Authority dinner held June 30 at FOB Lagman.**